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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/664,273	09/16/2003	George D. Hermann	06-516 US	3435

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BACHMAN & LAPOINTE, P.C.
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SUITE 1201
NEW HAVEN, CT 06510

EXAMINER

RYCKMAN, MELISSA K

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3773

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PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/664,273

Applicant(s)

HERMANN ET AL.

Examiner

Melissa Ryckman

Art Unit

3734

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on claims received on 7/6/07.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-49 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 4, 14 and 22 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 5-13, 15-21, 23-49 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

This office action is in response to claims filed 7/6/07.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-3,15-21,30-33,48 and 49 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated Pierce (US 5893878).

Claims 1,19:

Pierce teaches an insert (44) for attachment to a jaw-type surgical instrument (Fig. 1) adapted for grasping or occluding a vessel, said insert comprising a compliant cushion (22) having a tissue-engaging contact surface (24) and having a plurality of molded, hooked traction elements on at least a region of said surface (fig. 1), wherein said hooked traction elements are of unitary construction with said tissue engaging contact surface (Fig. 13).

Claims 2,3,20,21:

Pierce teaches said molded, hooked traction elements are configured to have at least two crook (fig. 13, 80 and 24).

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Claim 48:

Pierce teaches the method of occluding a vessel or other body conduit comprising the steps of: (a) providing a jaw-type surgical instrument comprising at least one jaw (44) having a compliant clamping surface (24) adapted for grasping or occluding a vessel, the clamping surface having a plurality of molded, hooked traction elements on at least a region of said surface (Fig. 13); (b) contacting said clamping surface with a vessel or other body conduit (abstract, lines 1-3); and (c) actuating said instrument to occlude said vessel or other body conduit (abstract, last two lines), wherein said hooked traction elements are of unitary construction with said tissue engaging contact surface (Fig. 13).

Claim 49:

Pierce teaches a method of grasping tissue comprising the steps of: (a) providing a jaw-type surgical instrument comprising at least one jaw (44) having a compliant clamping surface (24) adapted for grasping or occluding a vessel, the clamping surface having a plurality of molded, hooked traction elements on at least a region of said surface; (b) contacting said clamping surface with tissue (abstract, lines 1-3); and (c) actuating said instrument to grasp said tissue (abstract, last two lines), wherein said hooked traction elements are of unitary construction with said tissue engaging contact surface (Fig. 13).

Claims 15-18 and 30-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pierce.

Pierce teaches an insert for attachment to the jaw of a surgical clamp, said insert comprising a compliant cushion (24) having a tissue-engaging contact surface and a plurality of molded, hooked traction elements located on at least a region of said surface (fig. 13), wherein when said insert is attached to said jaw, wherein said hooked traction elements are of unitary construction with said tissue engaging contact surface (Fig. 13), but fails to disclose the tractive force of the device as being of between about 6 and 8 pounds, or 1.5 to about 2.5 pounds is provided on a vessel clamped by the clamp. Since the device of Pierce teaches all structural limitations as set forth by independent claims 15, 17, 30 and 32, it is inherent that the device is capable of performing the function required by the claims, that being providing traction forces of either 6-8 pounds or 1.5-2 pounds.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.

4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

Claims 5-7, 23-25 and 42-47 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pierce in view of Bramstedt (US 2706987).

Pierce teaches an insert (44) for attachment to a jaw-type surgical instrument (Fig. 1) adapted for grasping or occluding a vessel, said insert comprising a compliant cushion (22) having a tissue-engaging contact surface (24) and having a plurality of molded, hooked traction elements on at least a region of said surface (fig. 1), wherein said hooked traction elements are of unitary construction with said tissue engaging contact surface (Fig. 13), but is silent regarding the height of the traction elements being no more than about .3mm. Bramstedt teaches surgical clamp inserts, wherein the traction elements are .004-.008 inches (Bramstedt, col. 1, ll. 35) in order to provide lessened or reduced residual witness marks corresponding to less trauma to the clamped vessel.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the device of Pierce with traction elements no more than .3 mm in height in order to provide lessened or reduced residual witness marks corresponding to less trauma to the clamped vessel.

Claims 8-13, 26-29 and 34-41 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pierce and Bramstedt (US 2706987) as applied to claims 5 and 23 above, and further in view of Romanko et al. (US 6484371).

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Pierce and Bramstedt teach all limitations of preceding dependent claims 5 and 23, and limitations of independent claims 13, 34 and 38 as described with respect to claims 5 and 23, but fails to teach the density of hooked traction elements on the surface is at least $300/\text{cm}^2$.

Regarding the limitation wherein the density of the hooked traction elements on the surface region is at least $300/\text{cm}^2$, Romanko teaches wherein the density of the hooked traction elements may be up to 465 elements per square centimeter or less. It would have been an obvious matter of design choice to provide Pierce and Bramstedt with a traction element density of $300/\text{cm}^2$, since applicant has not disclosed that providing such a density provides any advantage over other densities, and providing a density of $300/\text{cm}^2$ is well known in the art.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 7/6/07 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. The applicant generally argues the following:

- Romanko provides a different function, but the same structure.

The examiner respectfully points out to the applicant that the structure limitations of the current application are capable of performing the function as described in the current application.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Melissa Ryckman whose telephone number is (571)-272-9969. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday thru Friday 7:30-4:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jackie Ho can be reached on (571)-272-4696. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only.

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For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

MKR



(JACKIE) TAN-UYEN HO
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER